

Box 1

# INDIA AND THE WAR

by

**DR. GEORGE S. ARUNDALE**

Two Addresses delivered at Bombay in  
November 1940

## I

*On November 11th, in the Sir Cowasji Jehangir Hall,  
Dr. Arundale addressed a meeting arranged by the  
Bombay Presidency War Committee.*

Sir Jehangir Coyajee, introducing Dr. Arundale, spoke of his eminent fitness to interpret international spirit and unity because of his travels throughout the world, and because of his successorship to Mme. Blavatsky and Dr. Besant as President of The Theosophical Society.

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DR. ARUNDALE: I am very much obliged to the Bombay Presidency Provincial War Committee which invited me to lecture on a subject which is exceedingly dear to my heart, than which there is no dearer subject, I think, at the present moment. I feel in lecturing here in Bombay I am making an additional link between the Presidency of Madras and the

Presidency of Bombay, because I am a member of the Madras Provincial War Committee.

I must immediately add that the Bombay War Committee is in no way responsible for the observations I am going to make. There has been no submission of my remarks to any censor, so that the Bombay War Committee is not responsible. Nor is the Madras War Committee responsible. I am quite prepared to accept responsibility myself for what I say. If I were to say also that I am not responsible, it would hardly be worth your while to come to an address delivered by an irresponsible person. I am the *fons et origo* of my talk.

I count it a very great privilege to be able to deliver this lecture on Armistice Day, partly because the day is sacred whether we celebrate it outwardly or not, and partly because we need in India an armistice between all the conflicting parties, between all the conflicting interests which so much disunite this splendid and sacred land. If I have any purpose in my talk at all, it is not to accentuate any divisions that there may be, but it is in order to try to insist upon the urgency of all conflicting parties coming together in a spirit first of armistice, second of mutual understanding and appreciation, so that there may be a united India to face this distracted world.

### **India's Need—One Aim**

The world suffers from India's present disunity, of whatever nature that disunity may be. Whether on the one side there may be a majority and on the other side a minority there should not be this disunity, this misunderstanding, this division, these different ideals and aims. We need in India one aim behind which the whole people of the country stand in solidarity. Only as India becomes one can the war end in a victory that is permanent.

This particular period is only one among many periods of war. The whole civilization, the whole of the evolutionary

process is beset by wars. There have been from the beginning of time innumerable Kurukshetras, innumerable disputes and strivings between Good and evil, between Rama and Ravana, between God and Satan, between Allah and Eblis, between those who may represent in every faith the side of Good and those who represent in every faith the side of evil. There is a constant and ceaseless conflict between Right and wrong, and that conflict is either in one form or in another, either in the actual form we find it today overt on the very physical plane itself as a conflict between individuals, peoples and nations, or perhaps there is another kind of conflict, a conflict of emotions, a conflict of national or individual ethics or morality.

Fighting there always is, and the purpose of every war is gradually to strive to change the whole world so that Right may increasingly be in the ascendant and wrong be pushed more and more into the background. It is always the purpose of war that the old order, of whatever nature that old order may be, shall yield place to the new.

Within the last half-century we are witness to two terrible wars, one of which lasted for four years—from 1914 to 1918, and the other which is still in process of unfoldment. Those two wars are catastrophic with the death of an old world and with what we hope shall be the birth of a new world.

## Why War?

Why is war? For the simple reason that the wrong that accumulates in the world from time to time on every plane of consciousness—in the mind, in the emotions, in all the functions of consciousness—that accumulating wrong must find sooner or later an outlet, just as impurities in the blood must sooner or later come forth in terms of an abscess. Where the abscess takes place does not much matter. The fact lies in the impurity of the blood, no matter where the abscess happens to appear. I venture to believe that throughout the

world, and not merely in Europe or in China, where there has been actual and overt conflict, everywhere the world is in a condition of impure blood, and those impurities must be resolved, must appear upon the surface, must be fought where they appear. Wars must be fought everywhere, so that the whole world's blood may become clean and fresh and young again for the new world through which that blood will have to circulate.

### **The Old World**

If you think back half a century, or even longer, you will see how the world has been beset with unreal issues and with terrible conditions. Wealth has been prostituted to luxury and to the desire for power. Religion has become narrowed down into a demand for personal self-satisfaction in terms of pride. Power has become polluted into a spirit of self-aggrandizement. The arts have become ignoble as they, too, have been prostituted for self-stimulation along the lower lines of satisfaction. Self-development, education is for competition. Patriotism in so many countries is largely for vanity. Living generally is for the ease which may have to be brought about by cruelty to the lower kingdoms of nature through vivisection and through other wars which we human beings inflict upon our younger brethren through the tyranny which we exercise over those who are weaker than ourselves, and through the prevailing ugliness in which, so unfortunately, India the Beautiful is taking more and more part at the present time, borrowing the ugliness of a foreign civilization and imagining that thereby she has become civilized.

I hope I will not touch any Bombay citizen in a sensitive spot when I say I have only to look upon that sea-front to see ugliness in those terrible flats that are so much the same, all so close together, so that people cannot escape at any time from the spirit of the crowd in which there is so much the tendency to dwell at the present time. I think no less of that

City of Madras, which our late Mayor hoped to make a City Beautiful, but in which worthy aim I am afraid that he has only partially succeeded.

We have forgotten that wealth is for service, that religion is for the growth of us all individually and collectively into a Universal Brotherhood, that power is for the protection of the weak, that the arts are to bring us nearer to God along the pathway of reverence, that education is for happiness and not for competition, that patriotism is for a great example, and that our living generally is for Godliness, and as we grow for Godlikeness no less.

### **Why Do Our War Aims Fail?**

Strange as it may appear, with all these great ideals as the war purposes of the world, the war from 1914 to 1918 failed to achieve those purposes in any substantial measure whatever. The last war failed. It, too, was a war for great ideals. The utterances of every statesman in Europe were utterances telling us how we were fighting for Freedom, for Justice, for an absence of all those voices and weaknesses which made the life of the world so drab and ugly. Yet that war failed, as I think, largely through the Treaty of Versailles' ignoring the great President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, that great and idealistic man.

The war failed, and twenty-five years after another war has had to come to endeavour to redeem that failure for which millions of men lost their lives and the amount of suffering was indescribable. After only twenty-five years, once again a war. And yet how fortunate it is that the world is given an opportunity to redeem its errors. To me as a Theosophist it is clearly evident that there are working for the world's uplift those great Powers that move to righteousness, call Them by whatever name you will—the Rishis, the Saints, the Holy Ones, the Saviours of the world. These are the true Government of the world. All these Governments we have in country

after country are little more than toy governments. The real Spiritual Government can only be the Government of those Elder Brethren who, having passed through the evolution through which you and I are passing today, have transcended the weaknesses of human flesh and have entered that company of "Just Men Made Perfect," to quote the Christian Scripture.

### **The Lessons of War**

This war, I hold, is Their war, is a dedicated war, is a Holy War, is a war of great Crusade for Right against wrong. Even though it be true that it is the ignorance, the wrong-doing of the world that brings about the conditions which have produced the World War that we have in our very midst at the present time, even our wrong-doing, our ignorance, our mistakes these great Elders turn to our advantage that we may profit from them and may learn more quickly those lessons that we are down here to learn by heart, by will, and by mind, so that we ourselves may in due course join that company of the Great. The Christ said truly, "Ye are Gods." We are Gods in the becoming, and we need the lessons of war just as we need the lessons of peace to help us to achieve our Divinity.

The setting of the war today is largely the setting of the war twenty-five years ago: First ruthlessness in Europe—oppression, cruel injustice, to no small measure the aftermath of the last war's lessons unlearned. Yet known so well, they were repeated many a time and oft by the great statesmen of Europe.

Ruthlessness in Europe is one of the major causes of the war today. The crucifixion of China and the subservience of Asia, to which India in my judgment has paid far too little attention, is another major cause. We have been thinking of ourselves so much that we have not thought sufficiently of our brotherland China, our great comrade-to-be in the new world.

This crucifixion I hope India is gradually beginning to realize, for it is one of the major causes of war as we have it at the present time.

### **Delay of India's Freedom**

Then another major cause of war is the delay of India's freedom, that freedom which she should have enjoyed as a result of the last war, but which was not accorded to her through the dangerous hesitations of Britain, that unimaginative country which, after all its present splendour, which I for one so happily and unreservedly admire, still is so unimaginative that it does not see what to do, does not see that it could make India united for the war if only it knew what to do. To me that is one of the great tragedies that we face at the present time, a tragedy only comparable to India's own weakness. Misled as I believe she is by those who lead her sincerely, her leaders put before her issues that matter less and conceal from her those issues which matter infinitely more and upon the facing of which the very future of this country depends.

Finally, the underdevelopment of that great Commonwealth of the East and the West which we used to call "The British Empire," but which today is called "The British Commonwealth of Nations," that we have yet to know as "The Indo-British Commonwealth of Nations," but which we shall yet so know, I pray, in due course if only Britain and India will wake up and perceive their common destiny, their common purposes, and work together in equal comradeship and partnership for the help, nay for the saving of the world.

How stunted is the growth of India! How stunted the growth of the Indo-British Commonwealth of Nations! How dangerous is the situation, how unhappy is China, how ruthless, how much the slaves of evil forces are Germany and Italy! Yet, just as before, the war of today is for great ideals. Shall we forget them as we forgot the ideals of the last war? Shall we have another Treaty of Versailles, though it may be,



I hope it will be, a Treaty of Berlin ? But shall it be another treaty similar to that of Versailles when perhaps there may be some great man to help to lift up the Peace Conference into great dignity and universal nobility, yet who will be forgotten, ignored, laughed at as to all intents and purposes was President Wilson twenty-five years ago ?

We have to realize even against the statements sometimes of our myopic British statesmen, that this is not just a European war, this is not just a war for British safety, this is not just a war to preserve Christian civilization as the Archbishop of Canterbury quite naturally said it is a short time ago. It is not even just a war to crush the spirit of dictatorship and all its attendant evils.

This is a war, and we must realize that fact day in and day out, night in and night out, for the release in every country in the world and in every individual in the world of Freedom, of Justice, of Peace, of Contentment. The war will not be a victorious war from the standpoint of Right, unless every country becomes free, unless every country enjoys its rights, unless every individual feels that life is worth living, and that he can gain contentment from those surroundings in the midst of which he dwells.

### **Everybody's War**

This war is not merely Britain's war, nor China's war, nor Europe's war. It is everybody's war. It is the war of every nation throughout the world. It is the war of every faith. It is a war to restore culture where culture has been dethroned. It is a war to free the world from darkness into light. It is above all else, I venture to insist, India's war.

I have lived now in India for nearly forty years, and I have loved India passionately for forty years. I came out under the most benign auspices of my beloved Guru in the outer world—Dr. Annie Besant herself, who is perhaps if not the most, at least one of the most, faithful servants India has



known during the last century, or, may I say, does know. I began my career in India well, under her wise direction. Whether I have carried it on well is a matter of opinion. But I do say that the more I live in this country, the more am I convinced that this country has in her holy keeping, to no small extent, the future peace and happiness of the whole world. I regard India as the Mother of the nations of the world.

The West may have her splendour, certainly she has material luxuries and comforts, she may have those things which are so much affected by certain types of Indians today. But India remains India. The spirit of India cannot be in any wise diminished by the western clothes you wear, by the western homes and furniture with which you are surrounded, by the western food which you eat, by the western manners and customs which unfortunately the generations of today affect. They may render little service to India as they are not passionately Indians. But India can survive the vagaries of her transient populations.

### **Stand by Britain !**

As the Chairman rightly said, I have travelled probably over the whole of the world, and I know full well that India is the sacred and holy land. Not that I love Britain less, but I have had for many years perhaps a sense of ecstasy about India which many people may possibly have regarded as exaggerated, and perhaps even as an aberration. Now when I look at Britain, not from the standpoint of her relations to India, but from the standpoint of her standing alone with her Allies against the onward march of the forces of evil, I am proud to be an Englishman, and I say to myself, "Where would the world be but for Britain at the present time ?"

Gandhiji was very right—I do not think he is always right—when he said : "What will India's deliverance be worth if

England and France fall, or if they come out victorious over a Germany ruined or bombed?"<sup>1</sup> What will India's worth be if England and France fall? But France has fallen. Britain has not yet fallen, and I say, as one who is eager to preserve India's worth, who believes in India's worth, who believes in India's age-old spirituality, who believes that all the great differences have been brought into this country for the enrichment not only of India but the civilization of the world, I believe it is our bounden duty as Indian patriots, as lovers of India, to stand by Britain at this moment.

We cannot love India less, but we love her more when we see the greater issues of the war and know what we have to do against perhaps the effusions of crowds, against the exaggerations, against the blindness and the so-often sheepishness of public opinion. We know what we have to do, and so long as my voice lasts I shall certainly as a lover of India, an adopted son of India, I shall stand for Britain on the one hand, admiring immensely her heroism, admiring the religious spirit of her people. But on the other hand I shall say to her, "Wake up, Britain, and know what your duty is to your fellow-land of the East."

That is so very vital. If she does not wake up, the victory will be barren. If India does not participate in the victory, the victory will be barren. But if India participates in the victory, that victory will be fruitful of all those splendid things which did not flower from the Treaty of Victory twenty-five years ago.

So I declare, not without possibility of contradiction, but with a personal certainty of heart, of mind, of will, and of devotion, I declare that first of all the war must be won for the ascendancy of Good over evil, I declare that the victory must be fruitful and not barren, and to this end India must participate in the war.

<sup>1</sup> *Harijan*, 9-9-39.

## Voices in the Wilderness

Since it is a law of nature that there must even be voices to speak in the wilderness, I want to be such a voice, so that with one or two fellow voices perhaps, I may speak the truth as I know it and give forth that truth as best I can to those who are willing to listen to it. I want to be very honest, very sincere, and very patriotic, as Gandhiji is very honest, very sincere, and very patriotic. He may be right. He knows he is right. I may be right. I know I am right.

Therefore what is best? You should listen to us all, to the voices which are crying in the wilderness, and no less to the voices that are perhaps crying amidst the plaudits of crowds. If you are listening to all these voices, finally come to your own conclusions. Do not be swayed by anyone however much he may have place, position, power or authority. The only true authority for anyone is that of the voice of his own conscience, the voice of his own decision as to what he ought to do.

I am not here to try to convert somebody. I want to throw everybody back upon his own truth, as I am trying, having thrown myself back upon my own truth, to throw you back upon your own truth, that you may face your truth not swayed by crowds, that you may cease to become gramophone records as so many people are, as so many newspapers are. Do not be gramophone records except of your own matrices, except of that still small voice of your own unique and wonderful conscience.

India must participate in the war. I hark back to Gandhiji's utterance in the *Harijan*, the absence of which we so much regret from the press life of India at the present time. I always turn to the *Harijan* with a sense that I am reading the words of a very honest man who is ever willing to go to any length for the sake of his conscience, and I become refreshed thereby. I am only hoping the little lessening of the clouds may enable him to continue the *Harijan*, which

we always appreciate, though with which some of us disagree no less profoundly.

India must stand by Britain, because India must help to win the war. This is the time to come together, to be together, to work together, for a Universal Brotherhood composed of East, West, North and South.

### **Neutrality Is a Crime**

I hold that those countries which are neutral today, save where the reasons may be overwhelming, are almost engaged in criminal activities. Twenty-five years ago Dr. Besant said emphatically that "Neutrality is a crime." I can shelter myself behind her declaration. But I will add that neutrality is more of a crime today than ever it was. While it is not for us to be able to understand the individual circumstances of the various nations of the world, one can say on general principles that every country ought to fight for the Right from the physical plane inwards with all its men, with all its money, and with all its material resources.

### **India's Greatest Gift**

Here I want to introduce a point that is not always very congenial to my fellow members of the Madras Provincial War Committee and perhaps may likewise not be congenial to members of the Bombay Provincial War Committee. I hope if there are any such here they will turn a deaf ear to what I am going to say. I think we must contribute men, yes. We must contribute money, those of us who have any money, yes. We must contribute material resources.

But those are not India's supreme gift to the war. India's soul force is her greatest gift, and I am constantly saying this to members of the Madras Provincial War Committee. If only you will arouse her soul force in the villages, in the towns, and in the cities, though there is very little soul force in the cities, if only you will arouse that power in the real

homes of India's soul force, that will help the world to victory more than any amount of men, of money, and of material. We have masses of leaflets in Madras. I also contribute to them. I am sure you have masses of leaflets and pamphlets here, certainly more beautifully produced than anything we poor people in Madras can produce. Yes, they are all very well in their way.

But I want people to go into the villages and talk to the villagers about what this war means to them. I want people with fervour and enthusiasm to tell the village folk about the war, to sing to them with music, to dramatize the war, to use any way that shall bring the conception of the war home to them, that shall make them realize what is the real purpose of the war. Tell them what India has been in other days, how great she has been. When we in the West were wearing goat-skins and woad, and probably not even that, India had an advanced civilization. Tell them how India's opportunity is great now to achieve her destiny, her freedom, her independence, of whatever nature she wishes that independence, and how from such achievement, which should come without delay, she can build a magnificent Temple of Humanity and of Subhumanity too in which all the nations, all the faiths, all the peoples, all the races, shall worship together in common and universal Brotherhood which never again shall know war. It is India's soul force that is needed at the present time and we do not appeal to it as we should.

I say to you that all I care about, especially in connection with the villages that surround Adyar, the place in which I live, is that the villagers should have a sense of India's worth, a sense of India's beauty today, a sense of India's future not to be delayed. India's blessing upon the war is far more vital than any contribution of more material resources.

Of course, I do not suggest that men, money and material do not count. I agree as to the importance of men, of money, and materials, but if I am asked to say what matters most,

I declare it is India's age-old, immemorial, spiritual, potent, irresistible soul power, out of which shall come about the saving of the world.

### **A Charter of Liberties**

Yes, India must help towards the prosecution of the war. But if she is to do that immediately she must take immediate steps to be free.

The question of free speech is a minor issue. The whole question of the expansion of the Viceroy's Executive Council is a minor issue. What India needs to do is to declare her Charter of Liberties. What India needs is for Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians, Jews, Jains, Sikhs together to create a great Swadeshi Constitution, and then to say to Britain, "That is our Constitution, that is our Charter of Rights and we must have it."

I think today our leaders are wasting time, almost criminally wasting time, when on the one hand we can help to make victory more certain, and when on the other hand, now in the midst of the ruins of the old world we can begin to build a new world. This India of ours should not need to demand any favours of Britain, should not be a suppliant at the door of Britain waiting for a favourable answer from statesmen who have never been nearer to India than seven thousand miles away. How is it possible for such statesmen to govern this great country? I feel appalled at the thought that Britain with all her splendour, her magnificence in this present crisis, is so unimaginative, that she has so little vision that she does not see what she has to do.

### **A Great Declaration**

I know what ought to be done. Mr. Churchill, that great man—and I thank God for Mr. Churchill and wish there were Churchills in India—Mr. Churchill should move His Majesty the King-Emperor to make a great and royal and imperial

Declaration that henceforth this great Dominion of India shall become free, and it is for India to declare what shall be the nature of that freedom. It is not for Britain to tell us what she will give us. It is for India to declare what she will have.

### **Our Leaders Must Sacrifice**

We do not want all this Pakistan, Dravidistan, and all the other "stans" that may come up at any moment. We do not want differences unless we can bring them into a great solidarity. That is the sacrifice our leaders have to make. They have to give up their own individual pet ideas and to pool all their resources into a common measure of united and splendid endeavour.

I say to Gandhiji, "Never mind all this matter of Civil Disobedience, so very dangerous to us all."

I say to Mr. Jinnah, "Do not harp upon the idea of Pakistan," and to my friend Mr. Ramaswami Naicker of the South, "Do not bother about Dravidistan." We do not want to divide India. We must have a united India.

And thus do I call with my voice, my little voice crying in the wilderness, with few to care much what I say or how or when I say it. But I call to every leader in India, "If you love India, draw the Indian people together, make them one. Otherwise you have failed in your duty. You are not true to India, however much you may think you are true."

### **The Major Issues**

The major issue is the winning of the war and its equal comrade issue is a united India within a Swadeshi Constitution ready the moment the war is over, if not before. There should be a great, a free, an independent nation pulling her spiritual weight from the very beginning, pulling her material weight as she gathers it together for the service of her own uplift and for the service of the world.



You and I are now at the very time of India's reincarnation. You cannot help but believe in reincarnation for India, even though you may not believe in it for yourselves individually. India is being reborn. Her ancient greatness is being gathered together among us unworthy people it may be, but we are the best that are available. Her greatness is being reassembled, is being fired in this cauldron of adversity in which we are at the present time, and out of which India's pure gold shall once again be visible as it was, visible aforetime.

There is no greater history than that of India. There is no more magnificent philosophy to be found than that in India in every one of her great faiths. There is no finer type of individual than the villager in India, simple, dignified, a gentleman in the truest sense of the word. He is not like the rich gentlemen who live on Malabar Hills,<sup>1</sup> but like the poor gentlemen who form the background, the very heart, the life and the soul of India, more than any of us fine looking people can possibly do.

### **India's Pathway Is Clear**

India is being reborn reborn, for herself, reborn to help to save the world. Britain is helping to save the world, and though she may not know it, though her statesmen may be too deaf to hear, Britain is from her soul crying out for the help of India. She knows that she cannot truly win the war save with India by her side. India must not be deaf. India must respond. India must not bargain. India must not say, "If Britain gives this, then we will give that." That is unworthy of India. There can come no righteousness out of such an attitude.

Whatever Britain may or may not do, India's path is clear, and that path is to help to win the war and to win her own righteous and essential freedom.

<sup>1</sup> An exclusive residential district of Bombay.

## Foreign Education Must Go

I feel so strongly about this. I am no longer young, as you can see. My hairs are grey, such as there are of them. I have worked in India under the guidance of Dr. Besant for India. In fact I think that she and I and Mr. Wadia were among the first to have the privilege of being interned for our service to India. I feel that I have a right to speak for this adopted Motherland of mine. I feel all the more so, because I am no longer young, and I repeat on a very much humbler scale that which my own great leader said: "I hope to see India free before I die." She could not do it, because India did not listen to her, the great Apostle of India's liberty, as Dr. Besant was. I venture to say still that I hope with a very ardent hope, with a hope somewhat different from that of Dr. Besant, to see India free. Why? Because having been a teacher for many years, I am passionately eager that the existing foreign and unworthy system of education in this country shall be replaced by a Swadeshi system of Education in which the Indian soul of every child—boy and girl—shall be quickened to India's honour, to India's advantage, and to the illumination of every individual citizen.

I notice that the applause for that statement is conspicuous by its absence, largely because some of you have been brought up in that system of education, it has produced you, and are you not as good a production as could be made? And for others there is a negative policy of, "This is the system of education in which we are brought up. Why change it?" But I repeat that India will never be great until she has her own Indian system of education. That is what I want to see. How happy I shall be when all the schools, the colleges, and the university buildings are wrecked, even the University of Bombay, so that simplicity, nearness to nature, beauty, culture, the arts, may take the place of all those things which are now usurping their place.

India must win the war if she is to have a true system of education. India must win the war if she is to be free and happy, if culture and the arts are to come back into their rightful place in Indian civilization.

Finally, let me say as I look about this audience, and as I look upon any other audience in any other part of the country, I see one part of the audience in which I should place almost exclusive trust. I do not think much of us men. We make a great deal of noise and a great deal of fuss, and we strut about as if the future depended on us. The future does not depend upon us. It depends on the women. I look not to the men but to the women to help to win the war. When we can make our women who are the heart, the soul, the hope of India, realize that this war is for India's freedom, then the war, practically speaking, will have been won. I look about upon all the ladies, and I say to myself, "They are the real workers, they are the spearhead. If we are anything at all, we men, we are but the shaft of the spear."

You have listened to me very patiently even though I must necessarily have said things from time to time that may have caused you to wonder. Still I am happy to be here, I am happy to have poured forth my heart and my soul to you all.

We must win the war. Britain is helping to win it. India must help to win it, and India and Britain must go forward together as comrades into the future.

The Chairman thanked the speaker for foretelling a great Federation of the World which had been the aim of the last war. Sir Jehangir told what high hopes he and other colleagues had when the news came from Mukden of the Japanese invasion that something would be done by the League of Nations. "When one robber is left unpunished, it is an invitation to all other robbers," and invasions have followed one after the other. A great Brotherhood of Nations is being

produced in the crucible of today. The picture will be incomplete unless India takes her place in that Federation. But an essential preliminary is that our leaders shall come together, that we set our own house in order. That is the condition on which India's unity and greatness can be based.

## II

*On 16th November 1940 Dr. Arundale addressed Blavatsky Lodge, Bombay, as follows :*

In this second lecture on "India and the War," I find there are still a few matters on which I should like to lay stress.

I should like to say a word or two about the sentence upon Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, an old friend of mine for a good many years. He works largely in Northern India and I used to be a worker in Northern India, especially in connection with the educational activities of Dr. Besant.

I am perfectly certain that that sort of sentence does not help to draw India nearer to the war nor to make her more whole-hearted in its prosecution.

### **Remember Nehru !**

You all know Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is a very honourable gentleman. He has his own conscience which I must say I regard as perverted, but I have a right to my own conscience which equally he would regard as perverted. I would imagine he is entirely wrong in outlook, and equally he would imagine that I am entirely wrong in outlook.

As he was certainly courting arrest, he deserved arrest. As he was out for it, he deserved imprisonment. But four years' rigorous imprisonment, No, no. Emphatically and eagerly we must work for at least the substantial diminution of that sentence. I am wondering what Gandhiji is going to

do about it. I think it is for him to give us a reasonable lead in the matter. If he does not I should feel it my duty, though I am not in a position to give a lead, to take every opportunity of reminding the Indian public that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is in prison and the sooner he is out of prison the better. I shall hammer and hammer on the theme that either he should be released or that his sentence should be lessened.

I am out for India's wholehearted co-operation in the war, and anything that stands in the way has my emphatic condemnation. Whether I am right or wrong, it must have my emphatic condemnation. I must do all that I can do to get out of the way all obstacles that stand between India and the service that she can render to the world standing shoulder to shoulder with Britain on a mighty crusade, the like of which the world has so far never seen. This is my feeling with regard to the position in which we find ourselves as a result of the incarceration of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

### **Student Strikers**

It appears that certain college students in Madras struck on the occasion of the sentence upon Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Naturally they did. I do not approve of it. I am certainly opposed to it. I think they made a very definite mistake. They could have done very much better than that. But you know what young people are. Their minds are anyhow badly educated under this foreign system of education. Their minds do not amount to much, though they regard themselves as very much more clever than I am, for I never have any particular idea of claiming cleverness. Their emotions get the better of them. But they love India as much as we love India. They do not know what to do for India. They see a certain thing which they think they ought to do and they do it.

But all that has been happening for the last thirty-five or forty years. When I was Head of the Central Hindu College

in the year 1905—there was what was called “The Partition of Bengal,” on the occasion of which many Bengali students and students of the United Provinces became very excited and struck and did all kinds of strange things. They burned some of their opponents in effigy and generally went on with various types of highly undesirable, but perhaps from their point of view very natural, activities.

### Understanding Is Needed

What did we do in the Central Hindu College under the inspiration of that beloved and wise friend of youth—Dr. Besant? The University of Calcutta turned them out. She got permission from the authorities of the Allahabad University to take them in and look after them. With understanding and appreciation, she helped them there. That is the business of the authorities in Madras, no matter what the students may have done. We must understand, we must appreciate, we must help. I do not know whether the members of the present Government of Madras were ever young. I think they probably were like the rest of us. I do hope that when they were they too had these ebullitions, that they too got excited, that to them also came an overflow of emotions. If they will try to remember that and not to be so cold-blooded as they seem to be, and so hard-hearted as they seem to be, it will be of more service to India.

What is wanted today, before and above all other qualities, is the quality of Understanding, and I dislike any movement or publication that does not manifest it. I am hoping that wise counsels will prevail in Madras, and when occasions arise for these ebullitions they will be dealt with in a spirit of Understanding.

I have always found, out of my experience of a very long period—some forty or more years—that young India is the most delightful youth in the world. There is a very fine youth in the United States, especially in the western part of

the States, including the California region. But generally speaking, if you go throughout the length and breadth of India you will find the young people delightful.

Of course, they feel things strongly. In these days in which there is much bitterness, so much misunderstanding, so much clash between the various unfortunately contending parties, naturally they feel it. If they did not feel it, I would say that there was something radically the matter with them. I would say that they had become old like us before their years, that they had become old with old hearts, old minds, old emotions, with everything hard and cold, and without that flexibility, without that power to expand which is so vital.

I do so earnestly trust that the situation in Madras will be handled with a beautiful understanding. That is what we need in India at the present time.

### **We Are All Patriots!**

We do not want to antagonize honest patriots. I want to say here and now that we are all of us, no matter to what party we may happen to belong, lovers of India. It is ridiculous to imagine that any particular party has an exclusive right, a monopoly in, a copyright on patriotism. I never like to see in any leader's appeals to the public that his party is the only patriotic party. It reminds me of Dickens' phrase, "Codlin's the friend—not Short." You will find this or that leader of any particular party addressing the public generally, asking for public support, telling of the wonderful things that he has done, how he and his party served and how the other parties are actually trying to keep India down.

We do not want such a spirit now. Now is the time for Indians to come together on some common basis, it does not matter what it is, so long as it is a common basis. If only the majority of the contending parties in this country were able to come together on a platform, if only with a single plank! I am perfectly convinced in my own mind that there is not a



single soul from Gandhiji downwards or outwards who does not realize the essential importance of this war being won.

Sometimes there are people who tell me, of course very confidentially, that there are young and even older people who like to listen to the German Radio and that they believe more in the broadcasts from the German Radio than they believe in the statements of the B.B.C. Of course there are many people who like to live in a state of sensation and excitement, who like to creep about, after having listened to some sensational bit of news that does not come over the B.B.C., and say, "Do you know what I heard over the German Radio last night?" Then they get very mysterious, their eyes become very narrow, their brows become very beetling, they look over their shoulders to see if anybody is listening when they make these wonderful disclosures. Of course, the Government is very wise in letting people, at all events in their homes, listen to the German radio. But even those people who do listen and believe, they know perfectly well that if we were to have Hitlerism in this country, I should not be lecturing, Gandhiji would not be at Wardha, he would be in a more restricted place of residence if alive at all. That there would not be freedom in this country we know perfectly well. One of the things we have to realize is that however little we may be satisfied with the freedom we have, it is better than the far less than nothing we would get under Hitlerism.

### **"Lover of India"**

I am a very ardent lover of India. If there be anybody who challenges that statement, so much the better. I wish there were some to say: We know you love India, but I love India far better than you do. So much the better. Then we would have far more patriots, and we need many more. At the present moment not even do I yield to the chairman in my passionate love of India. I do not have a mere cold intellectual love of India, and certainly not a mere financial, a

mere commercial, an interested love of India. I am not thinking of any title I shall not get as a result of giving these lectures. I have all the titles I want. I have the titles I have brought over with me from the University of Cambridge. Then Dr. Tagore conferred on me another title when he was the Head of the National University. Then I received a third title which I value most of all—"L.I."—*Lover of India*.

It is because I do love this country, it is because I have lived in her land and served her as best I could for all these years, it is because she has been my supreme interest, that I know I must take my stand on the side of the war and India's participation in the war. But, as I said in my last lecture, that does not prevent me from perceiving both India's and Britain's duty.

### **An Indo-British Union**

I want to say this with every possible emphasis: We all know how Mr. Churchill, whom I always call "that splendid man," when a little too late, though unfortunately he did not know it at the time, urged the establishment of a Franco-British Union—one of the finest gestures in the history of the world. What do we want now? An Indo-British Union on the same terms entirely.

We want to bring these two countries together. Each must be free, independent. Both must co-operate in what they can perceive as a common cause for the benefit of each and for the service of the whole world. So in my little newspaper called *Conscience*, I try to hammer the idea of an Indo-British Union.

I think it would be wonderful and would make all the difference to the situation in this country if India's rightful place could be speedily, most generously, and righteously recognized by Britain. As I said in the Cowasji Jehangir Hall, I am hoping that Mr. Churchill will move His Majesty the King Emperor to make a great Declaration of the rightful place of

India in a great Indo-British Commonwealth of Nations. What a magnificent effect that would produce! If Britain will make a righteous gesture, India will respond by a righteous gesture. But while we are playing at hide-and-seek, the work becomes increasingly difficult. It must not become increasingly difficult, otherwise the war will inevitably be prolonged.

I was told today by some pessimist—there are a lot of pessimists in the world—that the war will last several years longer. Several years longer! Yes, it may if India and Britain cannot come together. If they come together a tremendous spiritual force will be released, India's soul force will be released and that will sweep Nazism and Fascism away.

### **Out of the Crowd**

The outlook is bright if only we will keep our goal clearly in our minds and work for it. As a friend of mine said the other day: "You are not a particularly popular person. The Government does not like you much because you are so pro-Indian, and the Congress does not like you very much because you often have occasion to differ from Gandhiji. So you are neither there nor here—you are just ploughing a lonely furrow in between." I am quite prepared so to do. It is better not to be in the midst of crowds. It is more worth while to be alone. There is such an amount of dust that crowds work up as they move about. The kind of dust the political crowds work up is the dust that causes us to become like sheep bleating the views which are uttered around us, themselves the echo of the views higher and higher and higher up.

You know how it is with a crowd—it is always repeating the same slogan. You know how it is with those people who belong to some political party. They also are always saying the same thing over and over and over again. Our newspapers are full of the reiterations of our leaders, no matter to what political party they may happen to belong. I too

say the same thing over and over again, but as I get less space in the newspapers, perhaps for that very reason the public may be more interested. God forbid I should become popular. It is very dangerous. I was popular once. With my beloved leader, Dr. Besant, I was interned by the Government of Madras for having committed the crime of working for Indian Home Rule in the year 1917. When we came out of internment, we were really wonderful people. Nowadays when I come to Bombay if twenty or thirty people come to meet me, I feel that it is a wonderful reception. In 1917 after emerging from an internment which I rather enjoyed, we were met literally by thousands and thousands of people. I am quite content to be neither here or there, so long as I am with my own sincerity, my own honest conscience, my own love, such as it may be for this adopted Motherland of mine.

### **We Cannot Afford Disunity**

We must not be against any party whatever. We must work to try to induce the leaders, including His Excellency the Viceroy, to come together; remembering in what straits the world is at the present time, we cannot afford disunity in any country. Disunity is far too expensive and extravagant. We know that we cannot afford it in Britain. Britain, the great barrier between the forces of evil and the future freedom of the world, has become united as rarely she has been united.

Not only has she become united but she has become a spiritual land more than she has been for centuries. She has had her times of spirituality. She has had her ups and downs. She has had her risings into the heights of hills and mountains where she has dwelt splendidly. She has had her periods of descent into valleys where she has dwelt duly, forgetful of her splendid mission, of the work she can do to help the world.

Today, so far as the war is concerned, she is up in the heights. Every letter I receive from friends all over Britain has reference to the religious feeling of the people. They feel themselves dedicated to a great Cause, as if God had conferred upon them the privilege of standing for Him against the forces of evil. No matter what injuries may come to them, no matter what tremendous devastation as a result of all this indiscriminate and awful bombing, still they remain calm, peaceful, and hopeful, and with regard to the issue of the war in their minds there is no doubt whatever.

They are a dedicated land, largely because external circumstances have forced them to become a united land. That is immensely to their credit.

### **India's Basic Refinement**

In every letter I write, which I hope at least reaches its destination, I urge that to this splendid work Britain is doing she shall add another great dedication into which she can enter—a recognition of India's splendour, a recognition of her immemorial spirituality, a recognition of India as the home of all the great Truths in every faith scattered throughout the world, a recognition of the fact that the average Indian—and this is the more true the less he is foreign-educated—is a gentleman.

I have worked among the trade union workers in Madras and in other places where these poor workers have to eke out a precarious existence. I do not think I have ever been more happy than I have been happy with them. Foreigner as I am, with entirely different habits from one point of view, and perhaps with an outlook upon life no less different, they took me to their hearts and treated me as one of themselves. In the midst of their hard lives, they regarded me and treated me with the greatest generosity and refinement—a refinement you cannot get in all your fashionable schools and colleges, a refinement which cannot be obtained in any of these westernized

universities in this country, a refinement which comes out of the very soil of India, a refinement which comes out of that closeness to the heart of India which is to be found in the villages, which is to be found on the land, which is far less discoverable in the towns and in the cities. India's basic refinement is not among those of us who have western coats and collars, ties and shirts, trousers, socks and shoes, who have westernized modes of livelihood, who have westernized ways of talking the English language. We are here today and gone tomorrow, you and I with all our smartness, and I am afraid also the ladies share in this with their modern westernized ways of wearing their saris. You cannot get without the greatest of difficulty a real Indian sari nowadays. People have no use for it. We are here today, and I hope we shall be gone tomorrow.

### **Foreign v. Swadeshi Education**

The real India will remain. When there is in India a Swadeshi system of education, when India's soul is set afire in every girl and boy throughout this land, when the Indian outlook and ideals dominate the national system of education, then will the world see India with all her real and her eternal age-old glory, and not in her present unhappy caricatured condition. It cannot be helped. You know how you have been educated. You know how perhaps in some cases your parents have wanted to take you abroad to receive a foreign education at Oxford or Cambridge, or in the olden days at Berlin, and Paris, and less often in Manchester. You know how, when the young Indian has learned all the beautiful virtues of the West—he has learned how to smoke, to eat meat, to be extravagant, to be discontented with the little home in which he has so far been happy, when he has learned how to wear all the paraphernalia of western clothes, he comes home. I remember meeting an old student of mine at the railway station when I landed in England—he was literally a

human mushroom, for he had on clothes far too large for him and an enormous hat under which I could not see him at all.

Some people call the dress I have on the Adyar dress, but at least it is comfortable. I am sure this dress can be washed far more often than can coats, trousers and hats. When I look at the average hat, it looks as if it had never been nor was it likely ever to be washed.

The time shall come when we shall have Indian universities which will have all the amenities that any foreign university can give. We shall not need to send our young people abroad. We shall be able to educate them at home in everything that is Indian. We shall be splendidly national in our universities.

### **Youth Is Winning the War**

If we are to have a free India, the war must be won. How convinced I am of that, and how convinced I am that it is youth today that is winning the war. The old people strut about and are very important, but of whom is the Royal Air Force composed which is doing so magnificently at the present time? In the submarines who are the crews for the most part? Young people of 21, 22, and 23. It is the young people who are winning the war, even though there are statesmen behind presumably directing it. The young people are winning the war. I hope, because of that, the young people will help to win the peace. We are going to have a Treaty of Berlin, not of Versailles. All those who have contributed to victory—the British Isles, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, the Greeks, the Norwegians, the Dutch and the Belgians, and the French too, all of them will be gathered in Berlin and they will tell Herr Hitler that he had better look out for another job. In that conference I want to see young people, those who virtually will have won the war. I want to see young Indians gathered there.



## Our Task Is to Build

I do not want to see you young people always dissatisfied, criticizing, finding fault with this or that political party. It is so easy continually to find fault and to break down. It is far more difficult to build. The harder task is to build. What we want in India today is a band of youth who have given up that disuniting activity of trying to break everything to pieces, and are concerned with building the new India which is to be, and that India must be an India with her own Constitution, with her own Charter of Liberties, with a Swadeshi Declaration of Rights, embodying her ancient spirituality, composed of all the great rivers of her culture—Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Jew, Christian, Muhammadan, Sikh. If only there can be in India a group of young Indians to tell the older people to mind their own prehistoric business and that they will fashion a new India not belonging to any party, not owing allegiance to any particular individual, but worshipping at the altar of Youth, the altar of the Future, and not worshipping by themselves alone but with the youth of the whole world!

Never mind any who are leading you today. Honour them. Be respectful to them. But remember the India in which you will have to live is the India of the future, is the India you will have to build up with your own genius, your own patriotism, with all that is most fervent in your natures.

If you can begin to do that now, you will render an immense service to this mighty, this unique, this greatest of all the Motherlands in the whole of the world.

I am afraid that we older people tend to make rather a mess of things. Gandhiji is going along this line of free speech, Jinnahji along the line of Pakistan, and all the other "Ji's" along some other line that is not very fruitful. We most of us are at cross purposes and we are all very clear as to what we have to do. Let us play about. Let all the

Ji's do what they feel it is right to do. Let the young people think of the beautiful India of tomorrow, the India which we older people have never known and shall not know until we are reincarnated, perhaps in this very land which you young people will make splendid for us older people, for yourselves too, and for all the world.

If I hope anything as a result of this talk, it is that first, we may all come together in a spirit of mutual comradeship, of understanding, of appreciation of each other's honesty and sincere patriotism.

Second, that the young people of India without distinction of caste or creed or sect or of any other difference will be-think themselves of the service that they, as young people, as citizens of the Kingdom of Youth, can render to this ever-young land. That they will be busy about that work to which as young people they have been dedicated, into which they have been sent by a Providence which will bless this land with a wonderful youth.

Everything we can do to help the winning of the war we must do. But while we are doing that, we must make India ready for that pre-eminence which shall be hers in the not far distant future when she shall be not only free and independent, as she will be, but what matters infinitely more, the Mother of all the nations of the world, giving to each nation that which she alone can give, giving to each nation that which each nation is sorely needing and from the lack of which in part there is this present war.

May the Rishis and may the Saints and may Those who have this mighty land in Their holy and safe keeping guide us aright to become a great National Brotherhood, doing our duty to every member of the Brotherhood, making every member happy by reason of his membership of the Brotherhood, and setting an example of Brotherhood which shall give to the whole world that which someday shall be a Universal Brotherhood of the whole of humanity of this globe.

*The Chairman :* May I ask Dr. Arundale to form an Association that will work together to this end. I was reminded of the late Dr. Besant when she brought the youth of this country into the Home Rule League. May I request him as her humble follower to take up that movement of hers where she left it and galvanize the youth of this country into activity which will redound to the credit of our land ?